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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PRETORIA 001380

SIPDIS

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DEPT FOR P, AF/S, AF/SPG, IO/UNP

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [OTRA](#) [SU](#) [SF](#)
SUBJECT: VISIT OF A/S SILVERBERG

REF: A. STATE 052648

[1](#)B. PRETORIA 1376

Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission Don Teitelbaum. Reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) We warmly welcome your visit to South Africa to consult with the South African Government (SAG) on the President's strategy to end the suffering in Darfur. Sudan is one of Pretoria's top foreign policy priorities. SAG principals will appreciate the opportunity to discuss Darfur, southern Sudan, and other UNSC issues. South Africa's first four months on the Council have been challenging for them. The South African press and civil society strongly criticized South Africa's vote against the Burma resolution. SAG actions on the Holocaust resolution, Iran sanctions resolution, and opposition to the UNSC briefing on Zimbabwe have generated considerable public debate.

Darfur

[1](#)2. (C) Although South Africa supports deployment of a UN/AU hybrid force in Darfur, it will oppose efforts to impose UN sanctions on Khartoum. Despite the ANC's advocacy of international sanctions during the anti-apartheid struggle, South Africa now argues that dialogue is preferable to sanctions (viewing the two as mutually exclusive). In the case of Darfur they will be particularly reluctant, since President Mbeki believes he made progress lobbying Bashir to accept fully the UN/AU hybrid force during his April 10-11 visit to Sudan. Mbeki said publicly that President Bashir is "keen to see a speedy resolution of the situation in Darfur," describing the deployment of helicopter gunships as the only outstanding issue. This was Mbeki's third meeting with Bashir in the last twelve months, and each time Mbeki came away convinced he made progress. It is fair to ask the SAG why they believe Bashir will fulfill his promises now, when he has reneged, including with Mbeki, in the past. As always, the South African believe that everything can be resolved through dialogue and they feel the effort in Darfur focuses too much on military efforts as opposed to designing and implementing a peace plan.

[1](#)3. (C) South Africa has approximately 500 troops and 100 police deployed as part of AMIS in Darfur. South Africa has pledged to deploy 750 troops, but has been unable to fulfill this commitment so far. Its military forces are stretched thin with significant deployments in the Democratic Republic

of Congo (DRC) and Burundi. Despite our best efforts, the SAG often credits the EU with funding AMIS. You may wish to highlight again the strong U.S. financial and logistical support for AMIS from its inception.

14. (C) South Africa's main focus in Sudan has been the south, where it has long-standing ties to the SPLM. Mbeki and ForMin Dlamini-Zuma have expressed their concern that the international focus on Darfur has deflected attention and resources from the critical North-South peace process. The SAG values its position as chair of the (largely inactive) AU Ministerial Committee on Post-Conflict Reconstruction in Sudan. South Africa has self-funded a \$3 million project to build capacity among southern Sudanese officials. South Africa plans to open a Consulate in Juba later in 2007, and the GOSS will open a regional office in Pretoria in May. Mbeki complained during his recent Sudan trip that donors have not fulfilled their commitments in southern Sudan, so you may wish to emphasize the robust USG assistance.

Other Issues

15. (C) In addition to Sudan, your SAG interlocutors may raise the following issues:

Democratic Republic of the Congo: The DRC is a top SAG policy priority. South Africa has deployed nearly 1,200 troops under MONUC and has several large-scale assistance programs in the country. SAG officials strongly support the continuation of MONUC's mandate at current troop levels.

UN Reform: South Africa is a strong supporter of UN reform,

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particularly expansion of the UNSC. There is a continuing perception here that the USG opposes the possibility of permanent UNSC membership for an African country (which, in their own mind, should be South Africa).

AU/UN: During its UNSC presidency in March, South Africa chose as its thematic debate the relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations. South Africa, which is funding its troops in Burundi and Sudan under an AU mandate, wants to strengthen the relationship between the AU and UN, ideally using UN assessed contributions to fund AU missions.

Iran: Although the SAG supported UNSCR 1747, it remains deeply uncomfortable with the direction being taken on Iran. Your interlocutors may sound you out on envisioned next steps and may raise concerns about the P5 presenting non-permanent members with "take-it-or-leave-it" resolution texts.

I also recommend you raise the issue of Kosovo final status during your meetings, at least in passing. If you do not, the SAG will interpret this to mean that Kosovo is a low administration priority. The SAG has not decided its position on Kosovo and is torn between supporting self-determination and supporting inviolability of borders (Ref B).

BOST